

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----038566 071229Z /46

O 071208Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8810
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 12321

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EG, US, SO
SUBJECT: SOMALI PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO EGYPT: USG VIEWS
- ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HORN

REF: (A)STATE 116104, (B) STATE 116232 (RPTG HAVANA
- 1124), (C) NAIROBI 6702

SUMMARY: BRIEFED VP MUBARAK ON U.S. VIEWS RE HORN
DEVELOPMENTS PER REF A. MUBARAK EXPRESSED APPRECIATION,
BUT OPINED SIAD THREATENED BY ETHIOPIANS, CUBANS AND
SOVIETS AND SHOULD BE HELPED TO DEFEND SOMALI TERRITORY.
I URGED EGYPTIANS PRESS SIAD REFRAIN FROM COVERT ASSIS-
TANCE TO OGADEN INSURGENTS, WHICH CONTRAVENES PLEDGES
WHICH HE GAVE US AND COULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR US
PROCEED WITH PROMISED ARMS SALES. MUBARAK SAID SADAT
WILL DO SO, BUT NOTED SIAD IS UNHAPPY ABOUT USG POLICY
AND CHARGES USG NOT HONORING ITS COMMITMENTS. TOLD HIM
THIS NOT SO; WE ARE PREPARED PROCEED AND HAVE SO INFORMED
SIAD, BUT LATTER'S BELIEF HE CAN GET AWAY WITH CONTINUED
COVERT HELP TO OGADEN INSURGENTS IS SHORTSIGHTED AND
COULD POSE PROBLEM. ALSO TOLD MUBARAK THAT SOMALI REPORTS
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ABOUT PRO-SOVIET COUP ALLEGEDLY BEING HATCHED IN KENYA
ARE BASELESS. MUBARAK HAD SEEN ETHIOPIAN/CUBAN COMMUNIQUE
AND HAD NOTED ABSENCE OF ANY REFERENCE TO ERITREA. HE
EXPRESSED CONTINUING DISTRUST OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN
ETHIOPIA AND ASKED IF HORN HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN RECENT
VANCE/GROMYKO TALKS. END SUMMARY.

1. MET WITH VP MUBARAK LAST NIGHT TO BRIEF HIM, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ON USG VIEWS RE DEVELOPMENTS IN HORN. I RECALLED HE HAD ASKED FOR SUCH BRIEFING PRIOR TO SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE'S UPCOMING VISIT. WE UNDERSTOOD SIAD WAS ARRIVING FOLLOWING DAY. MUBARAK INTERJECTED TO SAY THIS IS ALSO GOE'S IMPRESSION, BUT AS OF TIME OF MEETING THERE WAS AS YET NO CONFIRMATION. SIAD, ACCORDING TO EARLIER MESSAGE, WAS SUPPOSED TO ARRIVE SOMETIME SUNDAY AFTERNOON, BUT NO TIME WAS GIVEN. THIS, MUBARAK NOTED WITH SOME EXASPERATION, IS TYPICAL OF SIAD'S ERRATIC WAYS.

2. I THEN WENT THROUGH POINTS CITED PARA 1 REF A. MUBARAK LISTENED CAREFULLY AND, AS HE ALWAYS DOES WHEN EXPECTED TO REPORT SOMETHING TO SADAT, HE ASKED FOR A WRITTEN SUMMARY OF MY BRIEFING. I HAD ANTICIPATED THIS AND GAVE HIM ONE, STRESSING IT WAS FOR SADAT'S AND HIS INFORMATION ONLY. MUBARAK INDICATED UNDERSTANDING AND SAID HE WOULD BRING IT TO THE ATTENTION OF SADAT SUNDAY MORNING. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE BRIEFING, BUT ALSO VOICED REGRET THAT USG IS NOT MOVING MORE QUICKLY. SIAD, MUBARAK CONTENDED, CONTINUES TO BE PRESSED BY ETHIOPIANS, CUBANS AND SOVIETS. HE SAID GOE HAD NO IDEA THERE BETWEEN 16,000-17,000 CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA AND VIEWED THIS AS GRAVE DEVELOPMENT. SIAD, HE ARGUED, NEEDS TO BE IN A POSITION TO DEFEND HIMSELF AND IT IS IN ALL OUR INTERESTS TO ENABLE HIM TO DO SO.

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3. I TOLD MUBARAK THAT WE RECOGNIZE SOMALIA'S RIGHT TO SELF DEFENSE AND, AS I HAD POINTED OUT, ARE PREPARED TO MOVE AHEAD ON SOME DEFENSIVE MILITARY EQUIPMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REPORTS THAT SARG IS STILL PROVIDING COVERT MILITARY SUPPORT TO THE SOMALI INSURGENTS IN OGADEN. THIS IS CONTRARY TO SIAD'S ASSURANCES TO US WHICH, AS WE READ THEM, CONSTITUTE A PLEDGE TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH SOMALIA'S NEIGHBORS. I AGAIN EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SADAT WILL PRESS SIAD TO REFRAIN FROM SUCH ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE U.S./SOMALI RELATIONSHIP WE WOULD LIKE TO FORGE AND ALSO IN THE INTERESTS OF STABILITY IN THE HORN. MUBARAK SAID SADAT AND HE WILL PRESS SIAD TO REFRAIN FROM SUCH UNHELPFUL ACTIVITIES, BUT THOUGHT USG SHOULD ALSO BE WILLING PROVIDE TANKS AND ARTILLERY IF SIAD HONORS HIS ASSURANCES. MUBARAK WISHED US TO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT SIAD IS VERY UNHAPPY ABOUT USG POLICY IN HORN. SIAD, ACCORDING TO EGYPTIAN REPORTS, BELIEVES USG IS NOT HONORING ITS COMMITMENTS OR, AT A VERY MINIMUM, IS DRAGGING ITS FEET. I NOTED THAT GOE, AS MUCH AS ANY FRIENDLY GOVT, IS WELL AWARE THAT USG ALWAYS KEEPS ITS WORD. IT WILL DO SO WITH RESPECT TO SOMALIA, BUT SIAD

MUST REFRAIN FROM HIS COVERT ENCOURAGEMENT TO OGADEN INSURGENTS. SIAD MAY BELIEVE OTHERS ARE NOT AWARE OF HIS COVERT ACTIVITIES, BUT THEY ARE. HE IS UNDERMINING THE CREDIBILITY OF HIS OWN WORD, THE WORST THING THAT A LEADER CAN DO, BY THIS KIND OF SHORT-SIGHTED ACTION. MUBARAK NOTED THAT SADAT AND HE ARE WELL AWARE OF SIAD'S SLIPPERINESS. BUT, MUBARAK NOTED, SIAD IS ALL WE HAVE AND WE SHOULD THEREFORE WORK WITH HIM.

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4. ALLUDING TO OUR EARLIER PERTINENT TALK, I THEN TOLD MUBARAK THAT OUR EMBASSY IN NAIROBI HAS NO KNOWLEDGE WHATSOEVER THAT A PRO-SOVIET COUP BEING HATCHED IN KENYA, AS SOMALIS ALLEGE, AND BELIEVES IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY. SOMALIS HAD IN FACT TOLD US SIMILAR STORY. FACT OF MATTER IS THAT KENYA REMAINS WARY OF SOVIETS AND KEEPS CLOSE CHECK ON THEM AND THEIR ACTIVITIES. I SUGGESTED THAT INFO COMING FROM MOGADISCIO ON KENYA BE TAKEN WITH A GRAIN OF SALT (REF C). MUBARAK SEEMED RELIEVED AT OUR ESTIMATE. HE COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD BE A VERY BAD THING IF KENYA, LIKE ANGOLA AND ETHIOPIA, WERE TO FALL UNDER SOVIET CONTROL. I SAID WE WERE IN FULL AGREEMENT.

5. I THEN ASKED IF GOE HAD SEEN CUBAN/ETHIOPIAN COMMUNIQUE (REF B). IT TURNED OUT THAT GOE HAD RECEIVED TEXT. MUBARAK NOTED LACK OF ANY REFERENCE TO ERITREA. I TOLD HIM WE TOO HAD NOTED THIS. WE BELIEVE IT SUGGESTS THAT SERIOUS DIFFERENCES EMERGED BETWEEN CASTRO AND MENGISTU, EVEN IF ONLY ON TACTICS AND TIMING RE FUTURE

ACTIONS IN ERITREA. WE UNDERSTAND CUBANS ARE UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM VARIOUS SOURCES NOT TO INTERVENE IN ERITREA, BUT MENGISTU IS PRESSING THEM TO DO SO. HOW
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THIS WILL EVENTUALLY WORK OUT IS ANYONE'S GUESS, BUT FOR THE MOMENT CUBANS SEEM TO BE SOMEWHAT CAUTIOUS.

6. MUBARAK THEN ASKED IF WE HAD DISCUSSED WITH SOVIETS THE SITUATION IN HORN DURING RECENT VANCE/GROMYKO MEETINGS. TOLD HIM I WAS NOT IN POSITION AT THIS TIME TO PROVIDE ANY INFO, BUT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO SO AT A LATER POINT. MUBARAK CONTINUED TO EXPRESS MISGIVINGS ABOUT STRONG SOVIET INFLUENCE IN ETHIOPIA.

7. MUBARAK ASSURED ME HE WILL THIS MORNING GIVE SADAT FULL ACCOUNT OF OUR TALK. EILTS

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